

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BUENOS 01651 122000Z

14

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /057 W

----- 115689

R 121521Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4812

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, AR, BL

SUBJECT: ARGENTINE FONMIN TO VISIT BOLIVIA

1. FONMIN QUIJANO WILL VISIT LA PAZ MAR 14-17 TO HOLD TALKS WITH BOLIVIAN COUNTERPART. TALKS, ACCORDING TO FONMIN, WILL BE AIMED AT "REINFORCING HISTORIC FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES," AND WILL INCLUDE DISCUSSION OF ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL MATTERS. WE NOTE THAT QUIJANO IS TAKING DIRECTORS OF ARGENTINE STATE RAILROADS AND TELEPHONE/TELEGRAPH SYSTEM ALONG WITH HIM.

2. THIS IS SECOND OF QUIJANO'S INITIATIVES WITH NEIGHBORING STATES. HE HAS ALREADY VISITED URUGUAY, AND WILL PROBABLY GO TO ASUNCION WITHIN A FEW WEEKS. PURPOSE CLEARLY IS TO TRY TO SHORE UP ARGENTINA'S DECLINING POSITION WITH SMALLER NEIGHBORS. ARGENTINA SEES ITSELF IN COMPETITION WITH BRAZIL FOR INFLUENCE IN BUFFER STATES--A COMPETITION WHICH BECAUSE OF ITS DOMESTIC EFFORTS TO REVERSE THE TREND, OR AT LEAST HALT ARGENTINA'S SLIDE--PROBABLY BY ASSURING NEIGHBORS THAT ARGENTINA HAS BETTER DAYS AHEAD.

3. INFLUENTIAL LA OPINION THIS MORNING (MAR 12) DESCRIBED BOLIVIA AS THE NEW DIPLOMATIC "HUB" OF SOUTH AMERICA, AND QUIJANO'S

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TRIP AS TRANSCENDING IN IMPORTANCE ITS LIKELY IMMEDIATE RESULTS.

FEW SPECTACULAR AGREEMENTS COULD BE EXPECTED, LA OPINION
PREDICTED, AND JOINT COMMUNIQUE PROBABLY WOULD SAY LITTLE.
IT WAS LONG-TERM RESULTS IN WHICH QUIJANO REALLY INTERESTED,
AND THESE OF COURSE COULD ONLY BE SEEN IN THE FUTURE.
HILL

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To: STATE LA PAZ
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